



United States Department
of Agriculture

National Agricultural
Statistics Service

USDA/NASS
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Washington Crop Weather

Released: March 24, 2008
Week Ending: March 23, 2008
CWP WA-CW1108

Winter Snows are Melting and Some Tillage Work has Begun

Field Crops

Days suitable for fieldwork were 3.4. Moisture conditions appeared to be adequate in eastern Washington. Whitman County reported slow field progress due to lingering snowdrifts. Adams County reported winter wheat was greening up and re-growth had begun. Asotin County reported producers were planting spring crops but progress was slowed due to wet and cold spring conditions. Walla Walla County reported some winter wheat streak mosaic virus was noticeable, and spring wheat seeding was winding down. Grant County reported processing peas were being planted in their southern portions.

Fruits and Vegetables

In the Yakima Valley, orchard tree pruning continued. Dormant/delayed dormant pest sprays were being applied. Apricot and cherry buds were swelling and pushing. In the past week, several nights of freezing weather had triggered frost control activities to protect the temperature-vulnerable fruit buds. In Snohomish County, some areas reported early stone fruit had come into bloom, and raspberries and blueberries were leafing out.

Livestock and Shellfish

Stevens County reported cattle producers were calving. Ferry County reported hay being imported at high costs. Pacific County reported oyster growers continued harvest operations. Damage to shellfish beds during the December storms had been noted. Shellfish producers were concerned about the potential of seed shortage due to bacterial disease.

Days Suitable for Fieldwork

Week	Days
This Week	3.4
Last Week	0.0

Moisture and Supply

Item	Percent			
	VS	SH	AD	S
Topsoil	0	2	74	24
Topsoil 5 Yr Avg	0	14	72	13
Subsoil	0	7	89	4
Subsoil 5 Yr Avg	0	5	70	4
Irrigation Water	0	0	92	8
Irrigation Water 5 Yr Avg	0	0	0	0
Hay & Roughage	28	20	51	1

VS=Very Short SH=Short AD=Adequate S=Surplus

Crop Progress

Crop/Activity	Percent Completed			
	This Week	Last Week	2007	5 Yr. Avg.
Spring Wheat Planted	3	NA	1	4
Barley Planted	10	NA	6	11
Barley Emerged	1	NA	1	2
Potatoes Planted	1	NA	1	1
Proc. Green Peas Planted	3	NA	4	3

Crop Condition*

Crop	% Acreage				
	VP	P	F	G	EX
Winter Wheat Dryland	0	0	8	77	15
Winter Wheat Irrigated	0	0	1	64	35

VP=Very Poor P=Poor F=Fair G=Good EX=Excellent
*Crop conditions are a measurement of the growing conditions and are not indicative of the quality of the crop produced.

COUNTY COMMENTS

Western

Clark: Ornamental crop producers finished up digging balled and burlap stock between rain showers. Garden center owners enjoyed the first day of spring with new customers.

Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific: The weather was both rainy and sunny with normal temperatures for March. Some farming began in Pacific County, but most producers were just getting ready for farming activities.

Mason: Spring began with wet, cold weather—much like the winter. Several nights of freezing temperatures confused the spring budding trees and flowers. Grass began growing again, but was still a little wet for livestock. Commercial vegetable producers were prepping fields for planting. Greenhouses were full of transplants.

Pacific: Spring rain showers limited fieldwork, but producers continued pre-season activities. With strong market conditions, oyster growers continued harvest operations. Damage to shellfish beds during the December storms created a minor shortage of market sized oysters. A seed shortage caused by a

bacterial disease may restrict spring planting. Pasture conditions continued to improve with the warmer temperatures. Increasing fuel and fertilizer prices were a major concern for producers.

Pierce/S. King: Producers have not been able to get into their fields because of soggy conditions.

Pierce/S. King (2nd Report): Rhubarb was not doing well because of the cold, rainy weather. Also, producers have not been able to get out onto their fields because of the wet conditions. Overall crop conditions were poor. There were no unusual situations to report.

Snohomish/North King: Wet spring weather continued. There was standing water in many lowland fields. Some areas received snow this week! Early stone fruit was coming into bloom, and raspberries and blueberries were leafing out. Home gardeners were busy preparing planting beds and finishing orchard chores.

Central

Benton: Lots of wheat was planted. Alfalfa lost acreage in the shift.

Benton (2nd Report): While field moisture conditions as a whole were adequate, the county could use some spring rain for newly germinating CRP grass plantings.

Franklin: Weather conditions were pretty good with temperatures dipping down into the freezing range in the early mornings. Fieldwork occurred throughout the county and to the greatest extent in the southern part. Moderate orchard frost control measures began. Irrigation water began flowing throughout most of the county a little over a week ago, with most of the irrigation occurring from well systems.

Grant: Processing peas were being planted in the southern portions of the county. Fieldwork activities, including plowing, disking, and cultivating were underway. Fertilizing was also being done. There were no adverse weather conditions to report.

Kittitas: Spring conditions were normal. The wind was picking up and remained steady, which was

rapidly drying out topsoil. Irrigation will be starting in a couple of weeks. Rangeland forage was just beginning to green up. A few farmers were fertilizing. Night temperatures were still below freezing.

Kittitas (2nd Report): Not much spring work began yet. Temperatures were mostly in the 40s and 50s.

Yakima: Orchard tree pruning continued throughout the Valley, and dormant/delayed pest sprays were being applied. Apricot and cherry buds were swelling and pushing. In the past week, several nights of freezing weather triggered frost control activities to protect the temperature-vulnerable fruit buds.

Yakima (2nd Report): Average temperatures varied from seven degrees below normal to eight degrees above normal, with a trace of precipitation. Low temperatures caused growers to use frost control measures.

Eastern

Adams: Soil moisture was limited and caused some growers to limit the amount of recrop spring cereal. Winter wheat was in mostly fair condition throughout the county, but limited soil moisture and spotty stands will limit yield potential.

Adams (2nd Report): A cold, blustery week kept most producers out of their fields. Winter wheat was beginning to green up and restart growth for the spring. Warmer temperatures would be welcomed.

Asotin/Garfield: Moisture conditions were adequate in most areas except the northern half of Asotin County and the eastern edge of Garfield County. In this area, precipitation was below normal and drought conditions existed. More rain was needed in these areas for proper crop development and for normal pasture growth. Producers began planting spring crops, but progress was slow due to cool temperatures and showers in areas not affected by drought conditions.

Columbia: It rained during the week. Some spraying has begun.

Ferry: The snow was melting on the low farm field, but the soil was still too damp to work. Hay was still being imported into the county at a high expense due to high forage and fuel prices. Cattle ranchers were feeling the financial strain of both the substantially increased costs and the lower beef prices this year.

Lincoln: Snow cover and cold nighttime temperatures limited farming throughout the county.

Lincoln (2nd Report): Some of the traditionally drier parts of the county have begun fieldwork, while the majority of the county was still too wet to begin farming. The winter wheat crop looked good for the

most part, although some reseeding has occurred. February received less moisture than normal, and some rain would be beneficial in many cases. Spring calving continued for some ranchers.

Pend Oreille/Spokane: Rain and snow was received during the week. A fair number of fields still have snow banks or drifts on the north side of the hills. Topsoil moisture was good with some moisture running off the fields when it rains and the snow is melting. Winter wheat fields looked pretty good coming out from under the snow. Some livestock producers were looking for hay to feed livestock. Fieldwork was still quite a ways off for most of Spokane County. In Pend Oreille County, the snow was slowly melting off the ground.

Stevens: Snow has been melting slowly over the past few weeks, with most of the moisture going into the soil profile. Cattle producers were currently in the middle of calving season.

Walla Walla: Intermittent rain showers were received throughout the week. Winter wheat looked mostly good. Some wheat streak mosaic virus showed up again. Spring grain seeding wound down. Cattle were on spring grazing. Most ranchers made it through with adequate hay. Hay for sale was almost non-existent.

Whitman: Spring work began. Seeding operations have also been done. Snow banks continued to linger stubbornly. March rainfall was welcomed but has slowed progress in the western areas of the county. The rain should help improve soil moisture conditions and melt snow banks.

Weekly Weather Statistics
March 24, 2008

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				GROWING DEGREE DAYS				LAST WEEK PRECIP			SEASON CUM PRECIP			
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	PCT NORMAL	DAYS
WEST															
Bellingham Intl	31	53	43	-2	0	-2	0	+0	1.03	+0.38	6	18.97	-7.11	73	122
Everett	35	58	43	-3	0	-7	0	+0	1.05	+0.23	5	23.96	-1.89	93	123
Hoquiam	35	57	45	-2	0	-7	0	+0	2.36	+0.80	5	44.96	-8.95	83	135
Kelso	30	61	45	-2	0	-7	0	+0	0.71	-0.27	5	26.09	-9.03	74	95
Olympia	28	54	42	-3	0	-2	0	+0	1.20	+0.13	6	36.90	-3.58	91	120
Seattle-Tacoma	34	59	45	-2	0	-7	0	+0	0.89	+0.12	4	27.43	-1.63	94	114
Shelton	27	56	42	-5	0	-7	0	+0	2.22	+0.78	5	48.66	-4.51	92	121
Tacoma WA AP	28	58	43	-3	0	-7	0	+0	0.94	+0.10	5	26.10	-4.64	85	106
Vancouver WA	29	60	47	+1	3	-4	0	+0	0.78	-0.09	5	29.29	-2.42	92	107
CENTRAL															
Ellensburg	21	57	40	-2	0	+0	0	+0	0.01	-0.13	1	4.88	-1.61	75	49
Omak AP	19	56	40	+2	0	+0	0	+0	0.03	-0.25	1	5.03	-4.06	55	41
Stampede Pass	24	36	30	+0	0	+0	0	+0	1.98	+0.36	6	55.35	-9.36	86	127
Wenatchee	27	57	41	-4	0	-1	0	+0	0.00	-0.14	0	3.56	-2.22	62	36
Yakima AP	22	61	41	-4	0	+0	0	+0	0.00	-0.14	0	5.07	-0.71	88	44
NORTHEAST															
Colville	19	54	39	-1	0	+0	0	+0	0.42	+0.00	3	11.25	-2.61	81	77
Deer Park	15	47	34	-6	0	+0	0	+0	0.62	+0.27	5	14.82	+2.54	121	93
Republic	20	52	39	+3	0	+0	0	+0	0.11	-0.17	2	8.04	-1.07	88	69
Spokane AP	26	48	38	-3	0	+0	0	+0	0.43	+0.08	5	11.87	+0.91	108	82
EAST CENTRAL															
Ephrata	21	58	41	-4	0	-1	0	+0	0.00	-0.14	0	3.49	-1.57	69	51
Moses Lake	19	59	42	-3	0	-1	0	+0	0.00	-0.14	0	3.33	-1.73	66	46
Quincy	21	58	41	-4	0	+0	0	+0	0.11	-0.03	2	5.35	-0.16	97	52
Ritzville	25	51	38	-4	0	+0	0	+0	0.29	+0.07	2	7.40	-0.45	94	66
SOUTHEAST															
Hanford	22	62	43	-6	0	-8	0	+0	0.00	-0.14	0	3.03	-1.73	64	36
Pasco	23	64	46	-3	1	-6	0	+0	0.01	-0.13	1	5.17	-0.21	96	51
Pullman	29	50	39	-1	0	+0	0	+0	0.34	-0.15	4	12.49	-1.99	86	81
Walla Walla Rgn	32	59	45	-3	1	-6	0	+0	0.26	-0.20	4	9.93	-3.50	74	72
Whitman Mission	23	62	43	-4	0	-7	0	+0	0.10	-0.21	3	8.60	-0.64	93	74
WESTERN IDAHO PANHANDLE															
Lewiston ID	28	57	43	-2	0	-7	0	+0	0.19	-0.09	5	5.10	-1.91	73	64

Summary based on NWS data.

Season Cumulative Precip Starts: Friday September 1, 2007

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).

NA = Data Unavailable

Precipitation (rain or melted snow/ice) in inches.

Precipitation Days = Days with precip of 0.01 inch or more.

Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

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National weather summary: <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/reports/waobr/weather/2007/summary/weth1606.pdf>

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